

IN THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application. An identifier indicating the status of each claim is provided.

Listing of Claims

1. (Currently Amended) An audience state estimation system comprising:

imaging device for imaging an audience and generating a video signal relative to the audience thus imaged;

movement amount detection device for detecting a movement amount of said audience based on said video signal,

wherein the movement amount is selected to estimate an audience state based on a contents provision state which indicates an environment condition of the audience,

wherein the movement amount detection device discriminates and extracts a pixel range which is a flesh-color area identifying flesh color from said video signal, divides the extracted flesh-color area into blocks, and calculates a movement vector for each of the divided blocks,

wherein the blocks include a face block representing a face unit of the audience and a hand block representing a hand unit of the audience, and block matching of a current image and a next or previous frame image is performed for each of the blocks,

wherein the movement vector is the movement direction and the movement amount when a result of the block matching indicating images of the blocks are matched,

wherein each of the divided blocks includes a plurality of pixels, and each of the plurality of pixels identifies flesh color; and
estimation device for estimating an audience state based on a comparison result of said movement amount and a predetermined reference level.

2. (Original) The audience state estimation system according to claim 1, wherein said movement amount detection device determines movement vectors of the imaged audience based on said video signal, and wherein an average movement amount showing an average of magnitudes of the movement vectors is set as the movement amount of said audience.

3. (Canceled)

4. (Original) The audience state estimation system according to claim 1, wherein said movement amount detection device determines movement vectors of the imaged audience based on said video signal and calculates an average movement amount showing an average of magnitudes of the movement vectors, and wherein a time macro movement amount is set as the movement amount of said audience, said time macro movement amount being an average of the average movement amounts in a time direction thereof.

5. (Previously Presented) The audience state estimation system according to claim 1, wherein when said movement amount is larger than the predetermined level, said estimation device estimates said audience state to be in any one of states of beating time with the hands and of clapping.

6. (Currently Amended) An audience state estimation system comprising:

imaging device for imaging an audience and generating a video signal relative to the audience thus imaged;

movement periodicity detection device for detecting movement periodicity of said audience based on said video signal,

wherein the movement periodicity is selected to estimate an audience state based on a contents provision state which indicates an environment condition of the audience,

wherein the movement periodicity detection device discriminates and extracts a pixel range which is a flesh-color area identifying flesh color from said video signal, divides the extracted flesh-color area into blocks, and calculates a movement vector for each of the divided blocks ,

wherein the blocks include a face block representing a face unit of the audience and a hand block representing a hand unit of the audience, and block matching of a current image and a next or previous frame image is performed for each of the blocks,

wherein the movement vector is the movement direction and the movement amount when a result of the block matching indicating images of the blocks are matched,

wherein each of the divided blocks includes a plurality of pixels, and each of the plurality of pixels identifies flesh color; and

estimation device for estimating an audience state based on a comparison result of the movement periodicity of said audience and a predetermined reference level.

7. (Original) The audience state estimation system according to claim 6, wherein said movement periodicity detection device determines movement vectors of the imaged audience based on said video signal, calculates an average movement amount showing an average of magnitudes of the movement vectors, and detects an autocorrelation maximum position of the average movement amount, and wherein variance of the autocorrelation maximum position is set as said movement periodicity.

8. (Original) The audience state estimation system according to claim 7, wherein the variance is calculated using a signal in a frame range, said frame range being decided on the basis of the periodicity of said audience state to be estimated.

9. (Previously Presented) The audience state estimation system according to claim 6, wherein a ratio of low-frequency component in the average movement amount is set as said movement periodicity.

10. (Original) The audience state estimation system according to claim 9, wherein a frequency range of the low-frequency component is decided according to the periodicity of the said average movement amount transformed to a frequency region to be detected.

11. (Previously Presented) The audience state estimation system according to claim 6, wherein said estimation device estimates said audience state to be in a state of beating time with the hands when said movement periodicity is larger than the predetermined level, and

estimates said audience state to be in a state of clapping when said movement periodicity is not larger than said predetermined level.

12-28. (Canceled)

29. (Currently Amended) An audience state estimation system comprising:

input device for inputting and generating at least one of video signal obtained by imaging an audience and audio signal obtained according to sound from said audience;

characteristic amount detection device for detecting, based on said video signal, at least one of a movement amount and movement periodicity of said audience, and for detecting, based on said audio signal, a piece of information on at least one of a volume of sound from said audience, periodicity of said sound, and a frequency component of said sound,

wherein the at least one of a movement amount and movement periodicity is selected to estimate an audience state based on a contents provision state which indicates an environment condition of the audience,

wherein the characteristic amount detection device discriminates and extracts a pixel range which is a flesh-color area identifying flesh color from said video signal, divides the extracted flesh-color area into blocks, and calculates a movement vector for each of the divided blocks,

wherein the blocks include a face block representing a face unit of the audience and a hand block representing a hand unit of the audience, and block matching of a current image and a next or previous frame image is performed for each of the blocks,

wherein the movement vector is the movement direction and the movement amount when a result of the block matching indicating images of the blocks are matched,

wherein each of the divided blocks includes a plurality of pixels, and each of the plurality of pixels identifies flesh color; and

estimation device for estimating an audience state based on a comparison result of the detected result of said characteristic amount detection device and a predetermined reference level.

30. (Original) The audience state estimation system according to claim 29, wherein said sound from the audience includes voice.

31. (Currently Amended) An audience state estimation method comprising:
imaging an audience and generating a video signal relative to the audience thus imaged;

detecting a movement amount of said audience based on said video signal,
wherein the movement amount is selected to estimate an audience state based on a contents provision state which indicates an environment condition of the audience,

discriminating and extracting a pixel range which is a flesh-color area identifying flesh color from said video signal;

dividing the extracted flesh-color area into blocks;

calculating a movement vector for each of the divided blocks ,

wherein the blocks include a face block representing a face unit of the audience and a hand block representing a hand unit of the audience, and block matching of a current image and a next or previous frame image is performed for each of the blocks,

wherein the movement vector is the movement direction and the movement amount when a result of the block matching indicating images of the blocks are matched,

wherein each of the divided blocks includes a plurality of pixels, and each of the plurality of pixels identifies flesh color; and

estimating an audience state based on a comparison result of said movement amount and a predetermined reference level.

32. (Original) The audience state estimation method according to claim 31, wherein movement vectors of the imaged audience are determined on the basis of said video signal, and wherein an average movement amount showing an average of magnitudes of the movement vectors is set as the movement amount of said audience.

33. (Original) The audience state estimation method according to claim 31, wherein movement vectors of the imaged audience are determined based on said video signal, and an average movement amount showing an average of magnitudes of the movement vectors is calculated, and wherein a time macro movement amount is set as the movement amount of said audience, said time macro movement amount being an average of the average movement amounts in the time direction thereof.

34. (Previously Presented) The audience state estimation method according to claim 31, wherein when said movement amount is larger than the predetermined level, said audience state is estimated to be in any one of states of beating time with the hands and of clapping.

35. (Currently Amended) An audience state estimation method comprising:
imaging an audience and generating a video signal relative to the audience thus imaged;
detecting movement periodicity of said audience based on said video signal,
wherein the movement periodicity is selected to estimate an audience state based on a contents provision state which indicates an environment condition of the audience,
discriminating and extracting a pixel range which is a flesh-color area identifying flesh color from said video signal;
dividing the extracted flesh-color area into blocks;
calculating a movement vector for each of the divided blocks ,
wherein the blocks include a face block representing a face unit of the audience and a hand block representing a hand unit of the audience, and block matching of a current image and a next or previous frame image is performed for each of the blocks,
wherein the movement vector is the movement direction and the movement amount when a result of the block matching indicating images of the blocks are matched,
wherein each of the divided blocks includes a plurality of pixels, and each of the plurality of pixels identifies flesh color; and

estimating an audience state based on a comparison result of the movement periodicity of said audience and a predetermined reference level.

36. (Original) The audience state estimation method according to claim 35, wherein movement vectors of the imaged audience are determined on the basis of said video signal, an average movement amount showing an average of magnitudes of the movement vectors is calculated, and an autocorrelation maximum position of the average movement amount is detected, and wherein variance of the autocorrelation maximum position is set as the movement periodicity.

37. (Previously Presented) The audience state estimation method according to claim 35, wherein a ratio of low-frequency component in the average movement amount is set as said movement periodicity.

38. (Previously Presented) The audience state estimation method according to claim 35, wherein when said movement periodicity is larger than the predetermined level, said audience state is estimated to be in a state of beating time with the hands, and when said movement periodicity is not larger than said predetermined level, said audience state is estimated to be in a state of clapping.

39-54. (Canceled)

55. (Currently Amended) An audience state estimation method comprising:

generating any one of a video signal obtained by imaging an audience and an audio signal according to sound from said audience;

detecting, based on said video signal, at least one of a movement amount and movement periodicity of said audience,

wherein the at least one of a movement amount and movement periodicity is selected to estimate an audience state based on a contents provision state which indicates an environment condition of the audience,

discriminating and extracting a pixel range which is a flesh-color area identifying flesh color from said video signal;

dividing the extracted flesh-color area into blocks;

calculating a movement vector for each of the divided blocks ,

wherein the blocks include a face block representing a face unit of the audience and a hand block representing a hand unit of the audience, and block matching of a current image and a next or previous frame image is performed for each of the blocks,

wherein the movement vector is the movement direction and the movement amount when a result of the block matching indicating images of the blocks are matched,

wherein each of the divided blocks includes a plurality of pixels, and each of the plurality of pixels identifies flesh color;

detecting, based on said audio signal, a piece of information on at least one of a volume of sound from said audience, periodicity of said sound, and a frequency component of said sound; and

estimating an audience state based on a comparison result of said detected result and a predetermined reference level.

56. (Original) The audience state estimation method according to claim 55, wherein said sound from the audience includes voice.

57. (Currently Amended) A non-transitory computer-readable medium storing an audience state estimation program, executed by a computer- processor, for estimating an audience state by processing information, said program comprising:

a step of performing any one of detection, based on said video signal obtained by imaging the audience, for at least one of a movement amount and movement periodicity of said audience, and detection, based on said audio signal according to sound from said audience, for a piece of information on at least one of a volume of sound from said audience, periodicity of said sound, and a frequency component of said sound,

wherein the at least one of a movement amount and movement periodicity is selected to estimate an audience state based on a contents provision state which indicates an environment condition of the audience,

wherein the step of performing detection discriminates and extracts a pixel range which is a flesh-color area identifying flesh color from said video signal, divides the extracted flesh-color area into blocks, and calculates a movement vector for each of the divided blocks ,

wherein the blocks include a face block representing a face unit of the audience and a hand block representing a hand unit of the audience, and block matching of a current image and a next or previous frame image is performed for each of the blocks,

wherein the movement vector is the movement direction and the movement amount when a result of the block matching indicating images of the blocks are matched,

wherein each of the divided blocks includes a plurality of pixels, and each of the plurality of pixels identifies flesh color; and

a step of estimating the audience state based on a comparison result of said detected result and a predetermined reference level.

58. (Previously Presented) The program according to claim 57, wherein said sound from the audience includes voice.

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